



HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING
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TECHNICAL STAFF REPORT

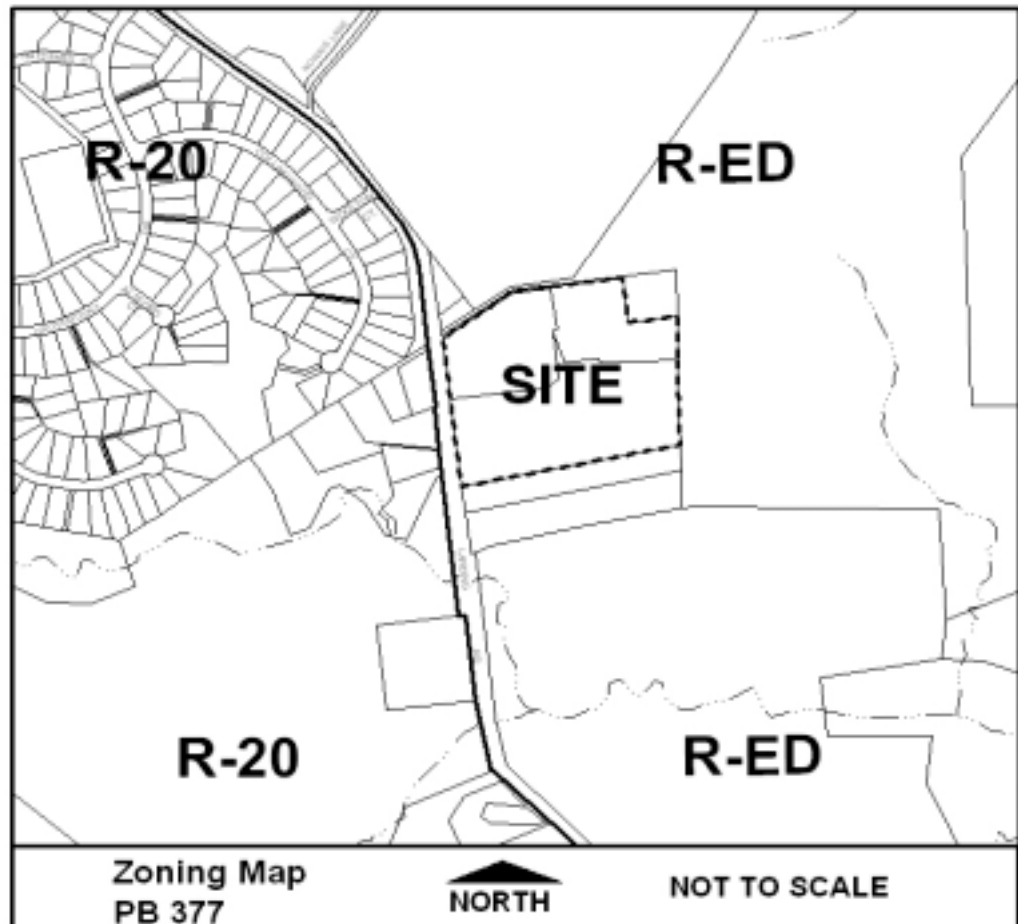
Planning Board Hearing of January 11, 2007
BEGINNING AT 7:00 P.M.

Case No./Petitioner: PB-377 / SP-06-15, Donald Reuwer Jr.

Subject: Planning Board Case 377, Preliminary Equivalent Sketch Plan SP-06-15, Grovemont Overlook

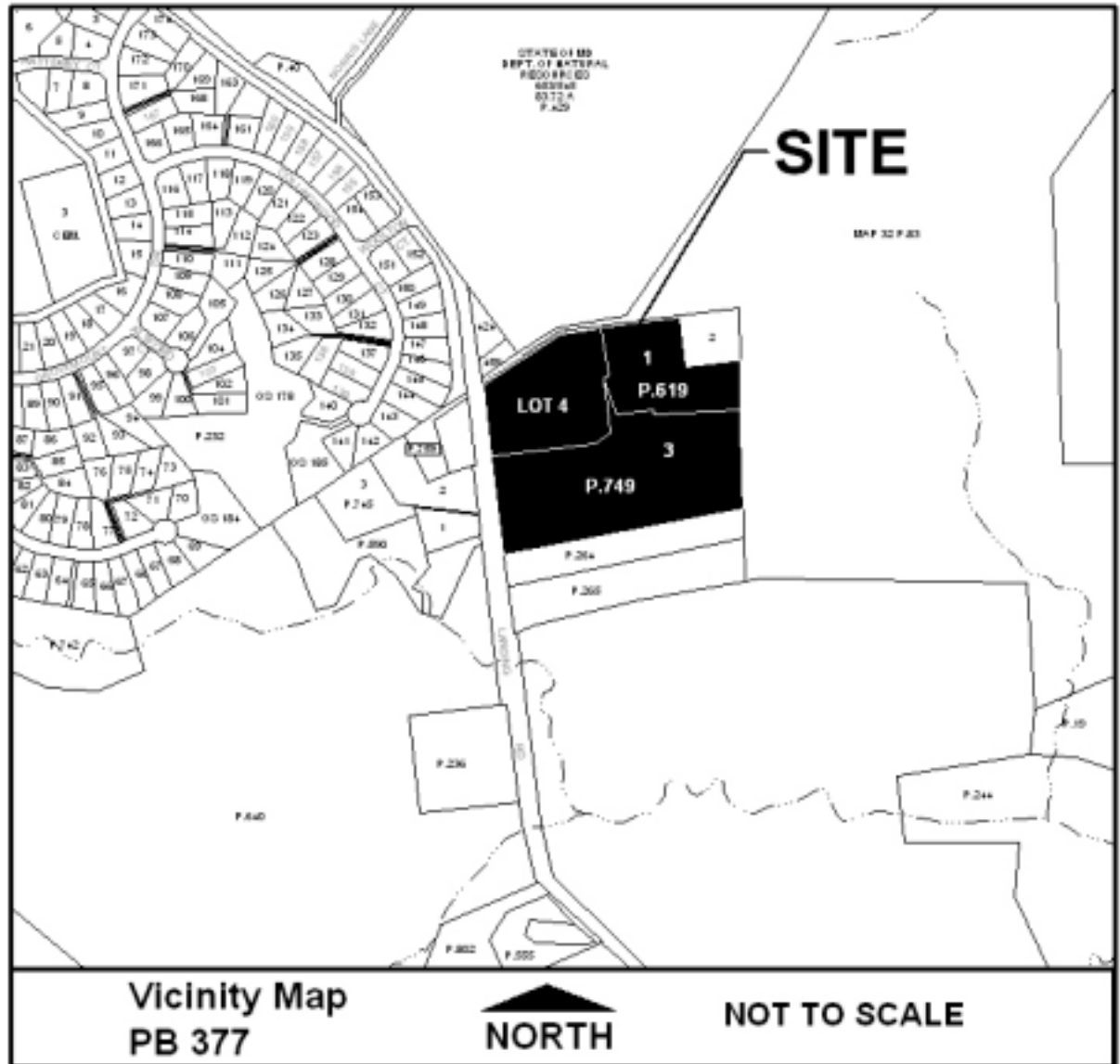
Request: For Planning Board approval of a Preliminary Equivalent Sketch Plan for 33 single family detached lots and 3 open space lots on property zoned R-ED (Residential: Environmental Development). In accordance with Section 107.E of the Zoning Regulations, the Planning Board must evaluate this plan at a public hearing.

Location: The proposed subdivision is located on the east side of Landing Road, south of Norris Lane, approximately midway between Ilchester Road to the north and Montgomery Road to the south. The property contains 17.87 acres of land and is identified on Tax Map 31, Grid 24, as Parcel 749 (Legal Property Lots 3 & 4, Plat #4857) and p/o Parcel 619 (Geelhart Property Lot 1, Plat # 5941) in the First Election District of Howard County, Maryland.



Vicinal Properties:

All of the property adjacent to the site on the east side of Landing Road is zoned R-ED, consisting of 2 developed residential parcels and the pipestem for Lot 2 of the Geelhart Property. The Patapsco State Park and Belmont Research and Conference Center lie to the east and south of the site. To the west, across scenic Landing Road, is Rockburn Branch Park and developed residential parcels and lots zoned R-20. Immediately north of those properties is the R-20 zoned Grovemont Subdivision, including 174 residential lots and 11 open space lots.



General Comments:

- A. The property was posted with one official Planning Board notice, placed at the future access point on Landing Road.
- B. Legal advertisements appeared in The Baltimore Sun on December 8, 2006 and in the Howard County Times on December 7, 2006.

- C. This project is subject to compliance with the 1st Amendment to the Fifth Edition of the Subdivision and Land Development Regulations (effective October 2, 2003) and the 2006 Howard County Zoning Regulations (effective July 28, 2006), the Howard County Design Manual, the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance, the Forest Conservation Manual, and the Landscape Manual.
- D. Project History: The Preliminary Equivalent Sketch Plan, SP-06-15, was submitted to the Department of Planning and Zoning for consideration by the Subdivision Review Committee on February 15, 2006 and was determined to be technically complete by letter dated August 30, 2006 with issues to be resolved directly with the Division of Land Development and the Development Engineering Division.

The issues of concern to the Division of Land Development were the sufficiency of the Scenic Road Exhibit, redesign to reduce the number of lots on a use-in-common driveway to the permitted six lots, an evaluation of the anticipated yield of a future subdivision of the Geelhart Property Lot 2, and discussion of abandoning the easement now serving that lot. These issues have been resolved sufficiently at this time.

The issues of concern to the Development Engineering Division were road improvements on Landing Road, modifications to an existing culvert, stormwater discharge, and soil borings, all of which will be resolved with the final design under the final plan submission.

The proposed design thus far has required no requests for alternatives to the Design Manual nor waiver requests to the Subdivision and Land Development Regulations.

E. Site and Density Information

Gross Area.....	17.87
100 year floodplain	0
Steep slopes of 25% or greater	0.98
Net Area	16.89
Maximum density permitted (2 units/net acre)	33.78 (33)
Proposed number of SFD units	33
Area of all residential lots	7.94 ac
Open Space	
Required (50% of gross area)	8.94 ac
Proposed (50% of gross area).....	9.04 ac credited
Proposed number of Open Space lots.....	3
Recreation open space required (300 sq ft x 33).....	9,900 sf
Recreation open space provided	10,000 sf

F. Site Analysis

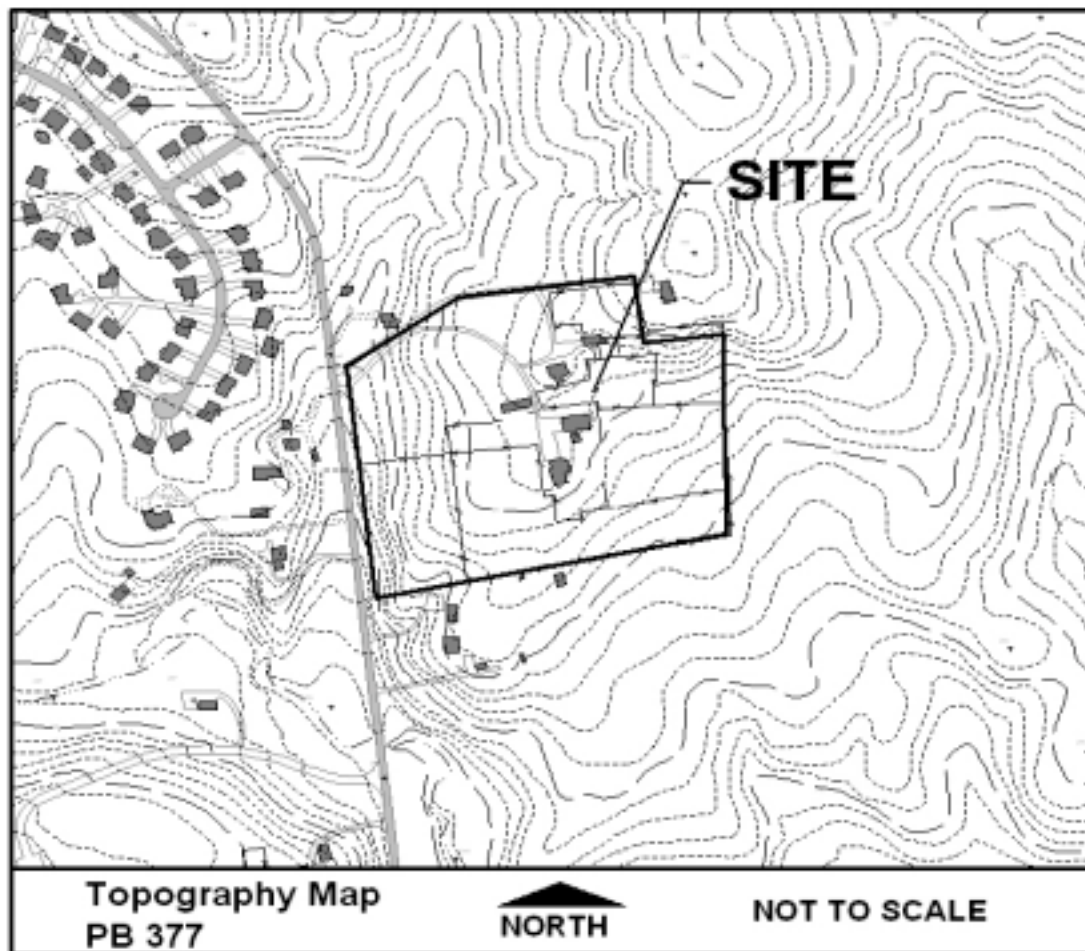
Parcel Data: The 17.87 acre site consists of Lots 3&4 of the Legal Property and Lot 1 of the Geelhaar Property, created from Parcel 749 and p/o Parcels 619, respectively. The Legal Property was incorporated into the metropolitan district on November 17, 1997 under Decision #20-1997. The Geelhaar Property was incorporated on July 19, 2004 under Decision #15-2004.

Existing Conditions: Two forest stands exist; Forest Stand 1 is on the western edge (0.8 acre) and Forest Stand 2 is on the northwestern edge (1.1 acre) of the site near Landing Road. The forest stands are approximately at elevations 290 and 330, respectively. The 0.8 acre forest on steep

slopes of 25% or greater is considered to be a priority retention area. Twenty-two specimen trees, all in fair condition, including 15 tulip poplars, 4 chestnut oaks, 2 black oaks, and 1 beech have been field located by the environmental consultant. All are along the northern edge of the site, within and outside of the non-priority Forest Stand 2. A small(1,500 s.f.) wetland pocket is on the far northeastern corner of the site. There are no streams on site. The site drains to a stream on the west side of Landing Road and to the east into the wooded hillsides of the Patapsco State Park and the Patapsco River.

The existing single family detached houses at 5301 Landing Road and 5331 Landing Road currently are served by private wells and private septic systems. Both houses are proposed to be retained, on Lots 17 and 26 in the proposed Grovement Overlook, sited at elevations 340 and 330, respectively. A third house will be demolished. The existing houses to be retained are sited well up the hill on an open, relatively flat ridge approximately 550 feet from Landing Road and toward the center of the site. Access to the existing houses is from a private drive near the northern edge of the site. The drive meanders up the hill to serve the 2 houses.

The dominant landscape features on the site as viewed from Scenic Landing Road are the forest and glimpses of open areas between the clusters of other trees and the drive curving up and away from the road. The site at this time defines the character of scenic Landing Road as a wooded hillside and an open site interior, and the existing houses are not visible because of the forest and the grade change from Landing Road. Frontage is 695 feet along Landing Road.



a. Proposed Development

The project consists of 2 existing residential units to remain and 31 proposed Single Family Detached house lots on a total residential lot area of about 7.94 acres. The existing houses will face the future public roads that serve them. Three houses will face Landing Road and will be sited at least 200 feet from that road. The remaining proposed houses will face one another across 2 public access streets which terminate in cul-de-sac bulbs and across use-in common driveways. The proposed siting of most of the 31 new detached houses is on the most easily developable, open, central portion of the site.

The lots range in size from 27,516 s.f. (Lot 26, with the existing house to remain) to 6,549 s.f. (Lot 31), with most in the 7,500 – 8,500 s.f. range. The minimum lot size for Single Family Detached lots is 6,000 s.f. in the R-ED district. Should the proposal be approved for 33 residential lots, no future resubdivision of any lot to increase the density on the site will be allowed under current Zoning Regulations.

A total of 9.04 acres of open space is proposed on 3 open space lots. These lots are designed and located to afford protection to the forest, to serve as a buffer between residential units and adjacent residential parcels, to provide recreation open space, and for the 3 stormwater management facilities. The stormwater management systems are located on open space along the site perimeters beyond the house lots.

- G. General Plan: The plan is consistent with the 2000 General Plan, which shows the site as residential.
- H. Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance: The project passed the test for vicinal road intersection adequacy based on the fact that no major collector/major collector intersections exist within 1.5 miles of the site. The site is located within the Elkridge Planning Area, the Northeast School Region, the Rockburn Elementary School District, and the Bonnie Branch Middle School District. Allocations are not available in the Elkridge Planning Area for this project, and the date of the Planning Board's signature approval of the Decision and Order for this PB Case 377 will determine the order of granting housing unit allocations. The availability of school capacity will be evaluated when tentative housing unit allocations are granted for this project.
- I. Stormwater Management: This project is subject to Howard County Design Manual requirement for managing the 1-year storm event. Two of the 3 facilities are designed accordingly; the third is intended for water quality only.
- J. Forest Conservation Program: The Forest Stand Delineation, which identifies the vegetative and environmental resources on this site, has been approved. A preliminary Forest Conservation Plan and worksheet, which tentatively identify the program obligations for development of this site, indicate that the Forest Conservation Program requirements can be met by retention of 1.21 acres of existing forest (including most of the priority retention forest in Forest Stand 1) and by planting 2.16 acres to meet the total requirement of 3.37 acres of forest within easement on the site. The Forest Conservation Plan will be finalized with the Final Plan and Plat application.
- K. Landscape Requirements: The design will include required buffers as well as street trees, sidewalks, and street lights at the Final and Site Development Plan stages of the proposal.

- L. Historic Sites and Cemeteries: The site is not an historic site, and there are no known cemeteries on this property.
- M. Scenic Roads: Landing Road is designated as a Scenic Road on the Howard County Scenic Roads Map and Inventory Report. The property has 692 feet of frontage on Landing Road.

Scenic Road Impact: There is minimal visual impact of the development of 31 new residential lots, a new public access street, and stormwater management facilities. Retained and planted forest conservation easements and planted stormwater management facilities intervene between the road and the proposed residential lots. The latter are sited at least 200 feet from the road.

Planning Board Criteria:

In accordance with Section 107.E.6 of the Zoning Regulations, the following criteria must be considered by the Planning Board when evaluating the R-ED zoned portion of this sketch plan.

- A. **The proposed layout of lots and open space effectively protects environmental and historic resources.**

The developer has proposed protection of environmental and landscape resources in the following ways:

- By clustering most of the residential lots on the relatively flat, open, interior ridge area, which is the portion of the site most easily developed;
- By designing the lots to be as near in size to the minimum lot size as practicable;
- By meeting the forest conservation obligation on open space on the site through retention and planting;
- By designing the stormwater management ponds in locations and configurations which will preserve a portion of the existing landscape edge to Landing Road.
- By designing a Public Access Place road configuration (with a 40' right-of-way width).

In employing these techniques, the limit of disturbance on the property is reduced to the extent practicable.

The credited open space proposed for this site is 9.04 acres, which is in excess of the 50% of the gross site area required in this R-ED zoned district under the 1st Amendment of the Fifth Edition of the Subdivision and Land Development Regulations. In addition to forest protection, the open space is provided for stormwater management and to buffer the adjacent residential properties to the north and south. The amount of open space provided exceeds the minimum requirement while allowing the yield of 33 residential units on the site.

- B. **Buildings, parking areas, roads, stormwater management facilities and other site features are located to take advantage of existing topography and to limit the extent of clearing and grading.**

Grading is limited to the amount necessary to create lots for 31 new houses and the infrastructure required to support the residential uses. The major impact of development on this site is the proposed clearing of a portion of Forest Stand 2 and a number of specimen trees for 3 residential lots (Lots 10, 11, & 12) and a portion of Road B.

The total disturbed area associated with this proposal for 31 new residential lots, a road, and stormwater management is about 12.3 acres of the gross site (70%). Proposed forest clearing is 0.69 acre within the forest on the northern edge of the site. Otherwise, the forest will be protected by a Forest Conservation

Easements within Open Space Lots 34 and 35 to be dedicated to the Homeowner's Association. Insufficient forest exists on the site so that the obligation of the Forest Conservation Program cannot be met fully by retention of priority forest on the site. Mitigation is provided by additional planting.

C. **Setbacks, landscaped buffers or other methods are proposed to buffer the development from existing neighborhoods or roads, especially from designated scenic roads or historic districts.**

A 30-foot structure setback is required from the project boundary for detached units. The Preliminary Equivalent Sketch Plan proposal complies with this setback requirement.

Views from Scenic Landing Road will be buffered by distance and natural topography, by forest conservation retention and planting areas, and by appropriate landscape planting.

The Howard County Landscape Manual requires a Type A landscape buffer (1 shade tree per 60 feet) along the boundary of the site between proposed single family detached lots and other adjacent residential properties, and a Type B buffer (1 shade tree per 50 feet plus 1 evergreen tree per 40 feet) is required around the perimeter of the stormwater management ponds. These planting requirements or appropriate alternative landscape solutions, as well as street trees, will be designed as part of the final construction drawings and subsequent site development plans.

Subdivision Review Committee Action:

By letter dated August 30, 2006 the developer was notified that the plan was technically, complete subject to resolution of issues of the Division of Land Development and the Development Engineering Division at the final plan stage. All agency comments may be reviewed in the project file for SP-06-15.

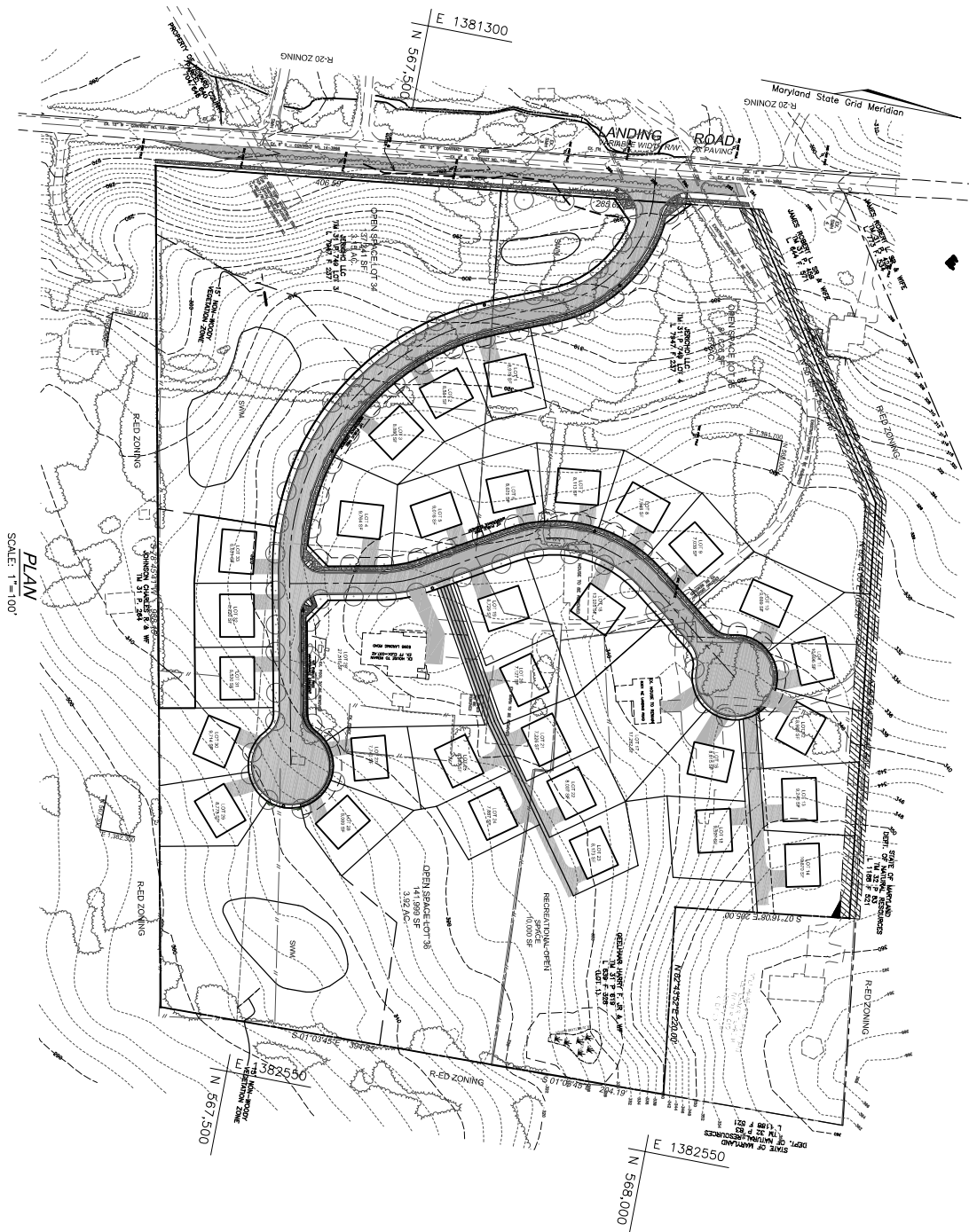
The file is available for public review at the Department of Planning and Zoning public service counter, Monday thru Friday, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

Recommendation:

The Department of Planning and Zoning recommends **approval** of the R-ED zoned Preliminary Equivalent Sketch Plan SP-06-15 for Grovemont Overlook, subject to resolution of the outstanding issues at final plan stage.


Marsha McLaughlin, Director
Department of Planning and Zoning

12/26/06
Date





Aerial Photo
PB 377



NORTH

NOT TO SCALE